

Higher Education Advisory Committee

Staff Summary

March 23rd, 2006

In attendance: Denny Heck, Libby Street, Beth Thew, Steve Mullin, John Warner, Roy Flores, Bernal Baca, Jim Bricker, Betti Sheldon, Dave Spangler, Jane Sherman, Diana Mamerto Holz, Susannah Malarkey, Ray Lawton, Tim Stensager, Robert Segura, Chris Alejano, Sally Jewell

Staff: Ann Daley, Washington Learns; Dana Richardson, Governor's Policy Office; Marc Webster, Office of Financial Management; Sarah Reyneveld, Washington Learns

The meeting began with a call to order and introductions from the members of the Higher Education Advisory Committee.

As the first order of business, Chair Denny Heck made a motion to approve meeting minutes from the February 21st Advisory Committee meeting.

Chair Denny Heck presented the "Work Plan to Completion" which outlines the meeting days and the primary objectives for the Higher Education Advisory Committee through the duration of the study.

NORED's Bill Chance presented A New Index for Comparative Purposes termed the "Global Challenge States", a new way to rank or measure Washington State's performance. Instead of using the 16 Western States that make up the WICHE group, the "Global Challenge States" uses the top states in the new economy index.

Marc Webster, Office of Financial Management, gave a presentation titled "High Demand Enrollment Efforts, Past and Present." The presentation provided an overview of the history of the High Demand Enrollment program. The presentation provided a summary of the Washington State program typified by: Higher subsidy rates due to higher costs in programs like Nursing, Engineering, etc; Competitive grants with Institutions submitting proposals that were reviewed by a team including HECB, the Governor's Office, COP, etc; programs that demonstrated a high degree of employer and student demand. Some members of the committee inquired why student demand matters? Others pointed out that student demand is also addressed through loan forgiveness programs, like we have for certain types of teaching.

Finally, Donald Heller gave a presentation on the "Cost of Instruction, Tuition, SFA and Apportioning Shares." The presentation provided an overview of tuition trends across the country concluding that 1) tuition has risen at a rate in excess of inflation 2) cost of higher education in public 4-year universities has increased as a % of household income percentiles. Mr. Heller also pointed out that higher education funding is

subject to economic trends. When economic times are good the state cuts appropriations and raises tuition prices, conversely, in bad economic times students get hit twice for rising tuition prices and less state aid. Therefore, higher education tuition is largely revenue driven. The presentation also outlined national financial aid trends concluding that since 1993 merit aid has increased significantly (20.7%) in comparison to need aid (7.5%). An example of an innovative merit-based scholarship cited was the *Georgia HOPE Scholarship program*. For further information on this program see <http://www.georgia.org/Business/Education/HOPE+Scholarship.htm>.

In addition, Washington's tuition and state spending were examined as a percentage of the national average with the conclusion that Washington's higher education institutions have become more affordable relative to other parts of the country. Next, Mr. Heller provided a summary of tuition policy options including: high tuition/ high aid (NY, NJ), mid-tuition/high grant, guaranteed (locked) rates (IL), differential by sector (CO), increase in non-resident tuition (CO) and differential tuition within institutions (U. Mich, OR). Finally, the presentation provided an overview of types of aid, including need-based and merit based grants. The pros and cons of these types of aid were further examined. For example, while some types of aid (merit-based) have little impact on college access, others (need-based grants) have been proven to have more of an impact on college going and completion rates among targeted underrepresented groups. The *Twenty First Century Scholars Program* in Indiana was cited as an example of an innovative need-based grant program worth further examination. For further information on the program see <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/news/21ProgressReport2002.pdf>.

The group then broke out into a discussion session to discuss the presentation and formulate and identify "what they liked" and what was worth further inquiry.

The following key points were identified by members of the committee in regards to tuition and financial-aid policy:

- Tuition policy should be accessible and the total cost of attendance should not be prohibitive. Indiana's *21st Century Scholarship Program* was discussed in this regard.
- Tuition policy should support middle-income families, while also taking into account the needs of low-income, middle-income, and high-income families.
- Differential tuition policy options should be considered. The "Sliding Scale" approach was discussed in this regard, although members of the committee expressed concern with the "sticker shock" effect.
- Tuition policy should be state-centered and accessible to residents of the State of Washington.
- Additional need-based grants should be considered.

- Any new financial-aid program needs to be transparent and easy to explain. An example of a transparent financial program discussed was Georgia's *Hope Scholarship*.

The meeting adjourned. The transitions working group met separately.

Transitions Work Group Meeting Summary

MARCH 23, 2006

In Attendance:

Work Group Members: Libby Street, Robert Segura, Tim Stensager, Diana Mamerto-Holz, Bernal Baca

Staff: Dana Richardson

Technical Advisors: Cindy Morana, Council of Presidents; Kyra Kester, OSPI; Bryan Wilson, WFB; Sally Zeiger-Hanson, SBCTC; Loretta Sepannen, SBCTC

Panel: Karen Copetas, Director of Admissions and Enrollment Planning, WWU; Wendy Peterson, Director of Admissions, WSU; and Loretta Seppanen, Assistant Director, Education Services, SBCTC; (Lisa Garcia-Hansen, Director of Admissions at CWU, and Emily Leggio, Asst. Director of Admissions at UW, also participated.)

Audience: Brian Jeffries, Gates Foundation consultant; Andi Smith, HECB; Sid Sidorowicz, City of Seattle

Adopted Position Statements: Members accepted the following two position statements with accompanying rationale.

Position Statement 1: Achieving equity in high school completion and college participation

- o *Statement:* The K-12 system and public higher education system shall continue to identify, implement, and measure strategies that effectively promote high school completion, preparation for post-secondary experiences, college participation, and post-secondary success among all students who struggle or who have been underrepresented.

- o *Rationale:* Two assertions support this recommendation. First, evidence suggests that bringing along students who are struggling the most enriches the entire system. Second, since particular programs work with particular student populations, each school will need to find its own way to achieve maximum success.

Position Statement 2: K-12 Guidance and Advising Systems

- o *Statement:* The state shall encourage each school district to implement a guidance and advising system that begins in elementary school, that is intensive, student centered, and curriculum driven, and that complies with the five principles that under gird Navigation 101 and shall develop a funding model to support it.
 - Consistent relation with an assigned advisor for the entire time in school
 - Student planning of curriculum
 - Student-led advisor-parent conference
 - Focus on data and evaluation
 - Development of a student-driven master schedule
- o *Rationale:* Programs built on the five principles remove barriers in the following ways.
 - They encourage students to achieve adequate preparation to achieve their life goals.
 - They encourage self-exploration and self-direction.
 - They are built on a model of cultural competence.
 - They engage families.
 - They serve all students equally.
 - They teach students and their families how to be educational consumers and how to understand and use the educational system.
 - They emphasize financial planning to enable access.
 - They increase the likelihood that all students who wish to be will be college ready.
 - The focus on data and evaluation ensures continuous quality improvement within the schools.

Drafted Position Statements: Members drafted the following position statements related to graduation and college entry standards. Specific statement and rationale language will be reviewed at the next telephone conference call.

Position Statement 1: Minimum Freshman Admission Standards

- o *Statement:* Members endorse the December 2004 revision of the Minimum Freshman Admissions Standards except that they propose revisions to the math requirements and the academic distribution requirements as follows:

- o The math requirements should read:
All students will
successfully complete intermediate algebra or integrated math III and will take a quantitatively-based course in their senior year, OR
will successfully complete math through pre-calculus
- o The Academic distribution requirements should read:
Students must complete a minimum of three core academic credits during each year of high school.

Members also encourage the HECB to ensure that the Minimum Freshman Admission Standards are easily understood, widely communicated, and equitably promoted to all students and their families in the K-12 system beginning early enough in the K-12 experience that students are empowered to make choices that provide options later in life.

- o *Rationale:* Successful completion of intermediate algebra, immersion in quantitative skill development, and recency of quantitative skills prior to college entry prepare students to complete college-level quantitative competencies.

Position Statement #2: Core Course Database

- o *Statement:* The HECB shall work with OSPI and the public baccalaureate institutions to ensure that the core course database related to the Minimum Freshman Admissions Standards is updated, maintained, widely understood, and equitably promoted. The guidelines for the database should provide instructions for schools about the expected content of the courses that are listed in the database.
- o *Rationale:* A current database based on commonly understood expectations eases transition for students from high school to college.

Position Statement #3: Convert Minimum Freshman Admissions Standards to Competency Language

- o *Statement:* The HECB in consultation with college and university faculty and other partners shall complete a version of the Minimum Freshman Admissions Standards in competency language building on existing college readiness standards alignment. The Transitions Math Project is exemplary of the development of college readiness standards in competency terms.
- o *Rationale:* Competency language provides clarity about the skills students are expected to demonstrate in order to be college ready and removes ambiguity that can arise from course names.

Inter-Institutional Transfer: The group heard from a panel of admissions officers and a SBCTC representative who presented a document that attempts to answer a series of this work group's questions about transfer among post-secondary institutions. They

described historic problems with college to college transfer, strategies that have proven effective for the very large majority of students who transfer from college to college, particularly the DTA, and identified problems that remain, particularly in establishing and effectively communicating major-ready pathways, in working with students who return after long absences, and in the special case of Running Start. They also described the recently established Bachelor of Applied Science Degrees and explained how modification in the AAS degree was easing transfer between the AAS and the BAS degrees.

The admissions officers and SBCTC suggested the following recommendations to the Legislature for consideration by the Washington Learns work group.

- I. Fund the planned upper division growth requested by each of the public baccalaureate institutions.
- II. Require institutions participating in the newly funded and piloted upper-division initiatives, as well as the relevant policy boards, to complete and share evaluations of the impact of these efforts over the next several years.
- III. Identify and fund appropriate incentives to increase the number of applied bachelor's options for applied associate degree graduates.
- IV. Fund an ongoing communication plan currently under development by the Joint Access Oversight Group.
- V. Fund the joint development of electronic courses identified as prerequisites in the Major Ready Pathways that are not currently universally available across the entire community college system.
- VI. Require all parties within the post-secondary sector to collaborate in the conception and development of an electronic, statewide, one-stop, information system regarding the degree completion requirements of public and independent institutions including a degree audit function based on the Major Ready Pathways as a primary organizing principle.

Members and staff in attendance also discussed the tendency of anecdotes to overwhelm evidence of effectiveness. Another possible recommendation would be to establish a common mechanism, perhaps using the ICRC executive committee or the JAOG group, to review the cases of students who contact legislators or university officials about difficulties they encounter with inter-institutional transfer. The group could then determine whether there are systemic issues that need to be addressed and recommend solutions.